



July 19, 2013

Education Reform Bill Passes House

As a nation, we are obligated to our children's success and as your Congressman I am committed to making sure we provide the best opportunities for our future leaders to succeed. The families here in San Bernardino County demand and deserve an education system that is second to none. Over a decade ago, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was enacted into law with the best of intentions – to hold schools accountable for student achievement so that the goal of world class education could be realized. However, it has become clear that the law no longer effectively serves the students it seeks to assist. Onerous Washington requirements are stifling innovation in education at the state and local level and hindering the ability of teachers to prepare students for the challenges of the 21st Century economy.

On Thursday, I supported the passage of H.R. 5, the Student Success Act, to address the weaknesses of NCLB. Specifically, the measure eliminates burdensome, one-size-fits-all Washington mandates and restores authority for measuring student achievement to states and local school districts. In addition, it eliminates NCLB requirements that place greater emphasis on teacher credentials rather than their ability to teach our nation's students, and restores responsibility for establishing teacher evaluation and requirement standards back to the states. We can all think back and remember the teachers who dramatically and positively affected our lives and I pledge to make sure the teachers of our nation continue to play that critical role in the development of our youth.

Ensuring that our children and grandchildren have the opportunity to succeed in today's economy remains a top priority of mine in Congress. Settling for anything less than a world-class education system is simply unacceptable. And while some may disagree on the approach to get there, it is a healthy debate that we must have. To that end, I will continue to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do what is necessary to ensure that students in San Bernardino County and across the country have access to the best education we can provide.

House Votes to Delay Costly Health Law Requirements for Families and Job Creators

As we approach the implementation date of some of the most complex elements of the 2010 health law, I have continued to hear concerns about the impact the law will have on the Inland Empire and national economy. According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, the labor force will be reduced by 800,000 workers by 2021 as a result of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). In anticipation of the law's most onerous mandates, taxes, and regulatory burdens, large and small businesses across the country have reduced work hours and scaled back plans to expand and hire new workers. Families here in the Inland Empire are still working as hard as they can to recover the lost ground of the 2008 economic downturn. It would be irresponsible for the federal government to inhibit our tepid recovery when millions of hard-working Americans are still struggling to find work, keep their homes, and support their families.

In an acknowledgement of how fundamentally flawed the law is, the Obama Administration recently announced that it would delay enforcement of the employer mandate – which requires businesses with over 50 full-time employees to provide health insurance or pay a penalty - until January 2015. Amidst concerns over the legality of this action, I supported legislation passed by the House this week that would provide congressional authority for the employer mandate delay. In addition, the House passed H.R. 2668, the Fairness for American Families Act, which would also delay the PPACA's requirement that individuals acquire health insurance or pay a tax penalty. I supported this measure because I believe that if employers are going to receive a delay from the PPACA's requirements individual workers and families deserve equal treatment.

For far too long, affordable, quality health coverage has remained out of reach for millions of hard-working American families. We should not simply return to the broken system of the past that facilitated this situation. However, the PPACA remains seriously flawed and I believe these delays are necessary. As we move forward, I will work with my colleagues to find common-sense, bipartisan solutions that will bring down costs, expand access, and protect our nation's seniors without making it difficult for small businesses to succeed.

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